

The Way To Freedom

By John Lawrence

It is the policy and practice of the capitalist class to keep the workers misinformed of his true interests. They well know that they can remain in power only so long as the workers remain ignorant, and only while the workers are ignorant will they allow the capitalist class to rule.

The chief agent in doping, stupefying and misleading the workingman's mind is the Press. The capitalist newspapers permeate every corner of the country. Their falsifications and propaganda (see "The Brass Check", by Upton Sinclair) are pelted against the workers' brains day after day, year after year, from San Francisco to New York.

The proletarian press, on the otherhand, is as yet so weak that you can count on your fingers the active revolutionary working-class papers.

This explains the indifference or antagonism of the working class as a whole when some portion of it is on strike. The strikers are represented in the press as going out merely to create disturbance, to stir up trouble. They are held solely responsible for the rise in prices; they are supposed to be making "unjust demands". Actually during the railroad strike there was a joke to the effect that the railroad workers would be striking for automobiles next to ride from one train to another in. We are told of the wealth the workers are accumulating, of the "extravagance" they indulge in on their wonderful increase in wages.

The Political Strike

The bitter iron of such distortions of the truth is apparent only when one knows the actual misery of the strikers' living conditions and the extreme modesty of the demands they are making. But who would let this truth be known? The capitalist press? No. If the proletarian press could penetrate half as far as that of the ruling class we should find a solid majority of workers backing up every economic strike in no matter what industry.

The political strike — that which has for its aim a political object — has only manifested itself in America during the past year. The longshoremen striking for the release of the mayor of Cork, the miners of Butte making as their first

demand last April the release of political prisoners, the longshoremen again at Philadelphia refusing to load munitions for Poland: these are political strikes. In Europe, where the workers have been driven to deeper class-consciousness by a longer history of degradation and persecution, and especially by their sufferings through the great war, the political strike has been used much more extensively.

As events proceed we shall find strikes in America taking on more and more a political as well as an economic character . . .

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What is to be done in the meantime? — Let every class-conscious worker get on the job, set himself more arduously to the education and organization which will bring to pass the new world.

The means to accomplish this are education and industrial organization of the working class toward the overthrow of the capitalist system, and the putting up in its place of a working class government (dictatorship of the proletariat) which will guide society into its new and better from.

Armed with this knowledge, and fired with indignation at the abuses and hypocrisy of the present system which he sees on all sides, the class conscious worker is fighting with every means in his power to awaken the rest of his class into activity.

No improvement in the unemployment situation in Detroit has been noticeable to careful observers in spite of the reassuring reports emanating from the chambers of the Employers Associations. Tens of thousands continue to tramp the city streets in search of jobs.

Union molders, patternmakers, machinists and others are hit by the present crisis. Some 400 patternmakers out of a total of 1,200 are out of jobs. Between seven and eight hundred union molders have also laid off the past four weeks.

The blind basket makers of London had to go on strike for an increase in wages.

Polish railroads are tied up by a wage strike.